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# The Playground

To Promote Normal Wholesome Play and Public Recreation



*Fairview Garden School, Yonkers*

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# The Playground

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*Fairview Garden School, Yonkers*

#### THE HARVEST



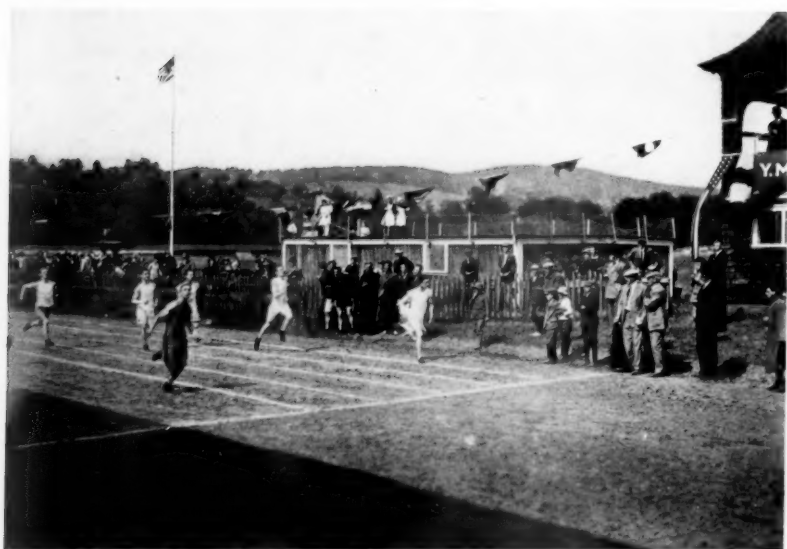
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#### THE FRUIT OF THEIR LABORS



*Windsor County, Vermont, Y. M. C. A.*

BAIT CASTING CONTEST AT A COUNTY PLAY PICNIC



*Windsor County, Vermont, Y. M. C. A.*

FINISH OF A CLOSE DASH

## WHY RECREATION CENTERS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC TAXATION\*

HON. NEWTON D. BAKER

Mayor of Cleveland

I am here tonight as a citizen, and I must look at this matter of why recreation centers should be supported by public taxation from the citizen's standpoint, and in order to get any fair start at the question as to whether or not recreation activities should be city activities in the municipal sense of the word, it is necessary to ask ourselves, What is the modern city? We hear the statement that it is impossible to change human nature. I do not know any more misleading and unnecessarily false statement than that. As we have developed from the ancient social organization into the modern city type we have undergone changes in human nature, in ideals, in standards, and it is a good thing if we stop to take stock and ask ourselves this question, What is the modern city? As we know, the ancient city was built, not for industrial reasons, but for military reasons, because it was a way of defending people against their enemies. The modern city is the coming together and the staying together of enormous masses of people because it is too expensive to live far apart, because of the time it would take to assemble for commercial undertakings. The effect of the massing of people in communities in large cities is to forego the natural advantages that the countryside affords. I do not believe it is an unmitigated blessing to live in the country, although I live in the country myself. I am aware of the inconveniences of it, and still I think from the social point of view that the loss that comes to us when we give up the country and come into the city is definite and is a thing which is felt in our lives.

### **Substitutes for the Country**

The American problem heretofore has been the replenishing of the cities from the country. Now the city is on the increase all the time, and we have difficulty to get people to go to live in the country in order to supply us with the crops that make up the necessities of life. The Country Life Commission was inaugurated to try to persuade people to go to the country and

\* Address given at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, June 8, 1912

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give up the natural gas and electric lights and street cars and all the other desirable conveniences of city life. It is no longer our problem to replenish the city population by drawing the young men and the young women from the country. The country cannot spare them. We have to look at the things the city does not have that the countryside does have, and then see if we cannot put something into the city life as a substitute for the things people forego when they come to the city. The thing we miss in the city from the country is the amplitude of Nature, the refreshment that comes from seeing the stars in the quiet night, from wandering along the meadow brook, from contact with the flowers of the field and with the song of birds, from the strength that Nature herself gives to the quiet soul that does not even seem to appreciate what is going on about it. Wordsworth makes Peter Ball say that the primrose on the river's brim is only a primrose to him, nothing more. That is a false touch or at least there are very few Peter Balls. It need never be only a primrose to everyone who passes by. It is contact of Nature with man that builds up the exhausted and depleted vitality that long hours in the city give him. When we exchange that for the brick walls, and the smoke, and the noise of the street cars, and the clatter of the horses' hoofs on the pavement, there is a constant drain upon the vitality of men, women, and children alike. It creates nerves, and is the reason why we are apt to fly off. The city tires us by reason of the modern pressure, the long-continued hours of hard work, no longer under the ideal conditions of the countryside. Contrast the modern factory worker, spending all day long, and all his days, simply putting labels on packages, with the old country philosopher-shoemaker, who cut sole leather and discussed politics at the same time. One is typical of the city as the other is of the countryside. When you go into these contrasts you realize that the nervous strain of industry and the suppression of our instincts are the things which hurt us most.

### **Recreation a City Function**

You know there are only two ways to prevent a newspaper reporter from printing a story; one is to kill him, and the other is to give him a better story. This is perfectly true of life and recreational activities in the city. There are only two ways to prevent unwholesome and unhealthful recreation in a city. One

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is to have none, the other is to present a fine, wholesome substitute for the bad that springs up. It is a thing that affects the life of the whole city. It becomes a matter of concern to the city. This wholesome recreation ought to be a city activity as distinguished largely from activities that are private, including church entertainments, clubs, or other groups. I say that in the greatest spirit of humility. In the city where I live there are most wise benevolences, and spirits sweet and fine that have established social settlements, which to criticize would be treason, and yet I cannot help feeling that all such activities are merely attempts on the part of individual citizens to supply something which it is the duty of the city to supply. The idea of a privately supplied playground is repugnant to those people who decline to be recipients of benevolence. There are a lot of children who go to the playground of a particular church, or club, or neighborhood, or school, especially a private or parochial school, who will resent any other children coming in. They feel a sense of proprietorship. For this reason it seems to me important that the city should be the head and front of the whole thing; to have it all headed up to one man, and he representing the city. Now this is its value,—that it makes the persons who participate come to associate their leisure hours and recreation with the thought of the city itself. The effect on citizenship is incalculable, if not immediate. It is more or less indirect.

Let us approach the problem by way of another point of view. Ever since the making of books and the writing of histories, mankind has been levying taxes to build jails and penitentiaries and workhouses and insane asylums, and having policemen and night watchmen, and judges and criminal courts, and all the various machinery for the post mortem cure of vicious and criminal people. It is distinctly recognized as a proper social function. It is society's business to capture the thief and the murderer and confine insane persons in hospitals. If that be true, if the treatment of those who have already erred is a proper social function for society at large, then by a strict analogy to the modern theory of medicine which has substituted for the theory of cure the theory of prevention, the anticipatory treatment of vice and disease is a social function. In other words, the city, the modern city, this great workshop—no longer a mere aggregation of persons, but a civilization with



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a definite ideal, economical and industrial, a vast mass of people with very definite and highly interdependent functions, so that if one worker drops out the whole social organization is disturbed, so that a little strike in a side industry will throw the whole social organization out of gear,—the modern city, with its great interdependence one upon the other, has an interest as a civilization in the welfare not only of the rising generation but of those who are already doing life's work, in every form of recreational opportunity and activity, whether playgrounds for children or public bath houses, or social centers where even elderly people can dance. The city is interested in the preservation of those vital things that go to make, first good nerves, second good morals, and third a high producing activity as members of the social aggregate.

**Diversion of Funds**      The city might very well divert (I am not appealing for larger taxation) from the jail and the insane asylum to the playground and the recreation center and the dance hall some part of its funds, in order to prevent the necessity of spending even larger sums on the jail and the insane asylum later. The control and the financing of recreation activities of almost every kind, I believe, is a definite and proper city function.

## PLAY COURSES AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SUMMER SESSION

A course especially for playground workers has been given at Teachers' College, Columbia University, during its last summer session. The course listed under topic of "Play Schools" in announcement bulletin was made over into a course on "Playground Theory and Administration," covering the educational foundations, activities and administrative problems in the recreational life of a community. In addition to lectures and reading assignments, special attention was given to observation of playgrounds in operation and of play conditions in city streets, moving picture shows, and dance halls. Besides this special course there were the regular courses in teaching games to children on the practice playground, folk dancing, gymnastics and dramatics.



IS A CITY JUSTIFIED IN SPENDING HUNDREDS OF  
DOLLARS FOR NEW BUILDINGS TO BE USED  
AS RECREATION CENTERS, WHEN SCHOOL  
BUILDINGS MAY BE REMODELED AND  
USED FOR THIS PURPOSE\*

CARROLL G. PEARSE, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN  
President National Education Association

This question is an exceedingly vital one,—how to finance playground and social center work. In the first fresh enthusiasm of philanthropic sentiment which sweeps over a community sometimes money is contributed freely by generous persons, but that is not likely to continue. There will be found few communities financially able to carry on such work by private subscription. It is necessary therefore, for us to learn how, in the most effective and economical way, we can provide and use funds which the public, by taxation, must provide. I think the proposition which I have been asked to discuss is not one which needs argument in such a company as this, or in many companies. It certainly looks reasonable that if we use our school buildings only a little while during the day (say, twenty-five per cent. of the day time) for purposes of study, they should be used some of the remaining time for purposes of recreation. The proposition sounds so well that it seems to me to need no argument unless there are difficulties in the way of such use so serious that they cannot well be overcome. I shall try to meet some of these difficulties that spring up when the suggestion of using the school buildings for recreation is made, or the difficulties which people imagine will spring up.

**Objections**

As the first thing to be noted it is worth while to consider that the hours for recreation are very largely different from those of study. Few people have time for recreation in the forenoon or early in the afternoon. Late in the afternoon and early in the evening are the hours when people who work have time for play. Those who work in factories, shops, stores, are nearly all employed during the hours when the schools are in session, so unless for some other reason there does not seem to be serious objection to using

\* Address delivered at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, June 6, 1912

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the school buildings for recreation. Since the schools are closed by half past three or four o'clock, they are then available up to bed time for recreation purposes if we choose. It is objected sometimes that school buildings as they stand to-day are not well constructed for these uses, that they lack assembly halls, gymnasiums, rooms which might be used for library purposes, for club rooms, for playing games, for natatoriums, for various other activities which might be suggested. Is this a fatal objection? Those of you who are school teachers realize that within a short time schoolhouses are not going to be so lacking. Few cities are building school houses nowadays without assembly halls. In prosperous cities few schoolhouses are without gymnasiums. Many cities now provide in their schoolhouses rooms for branch stations of the public library and reading rooms. I never could understand when I attend the Young Men's Christian Association why they did not allow members to play billiards. I do not understand now why they do not have bowling alleys. Why is it that a boy who wants to play billiards and whose father is not able to have a billiard table at home, must go either to a saloon or to public pool rooms? Why is it that a boy who wants a game of ten pins must go to a place where he gets something besides bowling between games? As we erect schoolhouses in the years to come we shall have consideration for the natural tastes of young people and shall try to provide the facilities that will attract both in and out of school hours. For any great length of time this objection will not weigh because the buildings have not in them these facilities. In many cities schoolhouses are too small and it becomes necessary to enlarge rather than to build others, and by some wise planning in connection with the reconstruction, the necessary gymnasiums, assembly halls, and other rooms can be provided.

But even if these facilities were provided for the use of the school, it might be true that the school boards would not be sympathetic. Schoolhouses may still be regarded by such boards as the places for reading, writing and arithmetic, and for nothing else. I know of no better way to bring about a change of attitude in certain quarters than to give to such unsympathetic school boards the responsibility of carrying on recreation centers. When the minority board becomes the majority and has responsibility it is amazing what a change comes

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over the spirit of those who were once in the minority. When we place upon the school board the responsibility of carrying on this work, let us say to them, "Here are things which can be made better by co-operation of the school board than in any other way." In the majority of instances I believe they will respond and that the duty will be well discharged. Fear to the contrary is more bugaboo than real danger.

### **Interference with Routine**

It is sometimes true that school officials, superintendents and principals, are loth to add to their duties; they object to having this work in the schoolhouse because it disturbs the orderly routine which has grown up in the school. I am inclined to think we school teachers are likely to be quite as hard to deal with as the school boards. The school boards are the people's representatives, and stand between the teachers and the people. The voice of the people reaches them more clearly than it does us. Nevertheless I have seen most hopeful signs among the teachers within a short time. Insight into the benefits which come in those schoolhouses where this work is carried on has had its effect upon school teachers who three or four years ago would not have liked the idea. They have seen so clearly the value of the work that they have undergone a complete change of heart. So to you enthusiastic playground and recreation center workers, who have had dismal forebodings with regard to the attitude of school teachers I want to say that even our hearts are warming toward this work and it is possible that you may expect from us cheerful and hearty co-operation.

In connection with this I look in the future for the playground commission in a great many instances to consist of the school board. An important part of the facilities for carrying on this recreation work must always be in school property. Some of them will be park property, to be sure. The school board is in sympathy with play leadership. The people who carry it on are usually teachers, educators. The boards of school directors have regularly organized machinery for sifting the value of workers, for testing the work, for seeing that effective work is rendered. So without the unnecessary duplicating of new agencies I look forward in many instances to see this work growing up in fine form under the direction of school boards. But, whether the playground or the recreation commission is

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the school board, or the park board, or a special commission as in some cities has been created, is not so important as that it shall be given a place to do its work without undue cost.

### **The Janitor**

In beginning this work, in a few cases, the most dreadful experiences have been undergone with janitors. You know how important the janitor is. When he is sick, or sulky, or unwilling, he can cause much unhappiness. When recreation activities have been introduced into a schoolhouse often the janitor has been more conservative and pessimistic than even the principal or the teachers. He has been afraid it meant that he must stay until eleven or twelve o'clock sometimes. A generous school board has sometimes paid him extra. Some thrifty souls have tried to do the extra work for the sake of the extra pay, instead of employing someone else. An important part of the organization will be the selection and oversight of proper janitor service. The janitor who has a large schoolhouse on his hands has all the work any one man ought to do, especially with the qualifications and education that are common among janitors. To add this extra work without adequate help is foolish. Where the work has been well done it has been learned that one of the first requisites to successful and happy recreational work is to provide adequate, capable janitor service. If someone can come to the building and take charge after school or in the evening, look after the rooms and comfort of the people and see that afterwards they are properly put in order for the next day's work, complaints from teachers and principals are likely to be few, and the general efficiency of the recreation work tremendously increased.

### **Danger from Germs Insignificant**

In discussing this matter today with a person for whom I have high regard, it was said that we should have perhaps in these evening classes people who did not take baths as frequently as they should, whose clothes were not always as tidy as they should be, that the schoolhouse which ought to be sweet and sanitary and hygienic and tidy would be invaded by the profane and the vulgar, might even be infected by those with disease, that germs might be scattered about for the benefit of the school children who would come the next day. There is something to be said on that score. There is no doubt this may be true, and yet many of the children in our schools are with these same men

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and women for eighteen hours of the twenty-four in their homes, on the streets and in the street cars and other places, and if the school buildings are properly cared for, and if we have vacuum cleaners, if the floors are properly scrubbed and the desks wiped, the danger is so small as to be, if not negligible, at least insignificant.

There always has been, so far as my experience goes, more or less trouble about this use of day school rooms for evening work. In evening schools people come to work at school subjects and sit at the desks of the school children. It is no new thing; it has been done for generations. Over and over again in the years of my experience I have known trouble to arise over the use of the day school classrooms for evening school work,—books and pencils have disappeared, and evidences have been left that some of these evening class men had the practice of chewing tobacco,—but these are perhaps incidental. If the schoolhouses exist exclusively for the little children for half the day, we should keep these things out, but if the school system is a larger thing and should have some responsibility for other elements in the community, then it is necessary for us to take such steps as are needful to see that the buildings are properly cared for and that proper arrangements are made so that not only school children but others who need education and recreation are accommodated also. The books which the children use during the day can be taken out of the rooms used in the evening. And there are other rooms, the gymnasium, the assembly hall, the corridors, the play rooms used by the children in the day time, the basement, all these facilities may be used to supply the needs of the evening service.

### **Education in Use of Public Property**

It is objected that the people who come to these gatherings in the evening are sometimes malicious in the use of the property, and mark and otherwise deface the walls. This is sometimes true. It is not unheard of that injury of this kind emanates from the school children themselves. It is said that these people's manners are bad and is it to be permitted that they shall come together in the schoolhouse and indulge these bad manners? It is thought by those responsible for the work that education is needed in the use of public property. Let us tell them how to use such property, teach them proper standards,

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in order that their standards and manners may be improved. Here is an instance that has come to my attention within the last three months. A social center was opened in the evening in a district where there were many factory girls who had left school as soon as the law allowed. They came to the center utterly ignorant of the uses of social intercourse. The social center attempted to steady these girls in manners. A beginning was made by telling stories of a sort to interest them. The first thing was to get them to sit still long enough to get the point of the story, to learn to listen while someone else was speaking. It took two weeks before they acquired the ability of not feeling so embarrassed in the company of others that they could gradually come to control themselves. In three or four weeks these girls who had been so rude that it was a matter of comment became orderly and respectful. The treatment of public property and of conduct in a public building is something which it is exceedingly well to have disseminated in the community.

### **A New Conception of Community Responsibility**

There is in our system of government an institution which does its work for us well,—the postal service. It gathers our letters, puts them together, sends them to various parts of the country, delivers them to other towns and cities. But the people at large hardly realize in this an important part of the government. It is merely a service. We have in every community another arm of the law which controls and constrains and drives boys off the vacant lots and forbids playing ball on the streets, which tells them to "move on" from the corner. It is not a good thing for our boys and young people to know only this arm of the law. There should be some place where these citizens-to-be can come in contact with the agencies of our government other than in the form of the policeman; so we have this institution which we call the school. To it the little children come. Here they are brought into touch with the educational agencies of the government. But there is no place now where fathers and mothers and older brothers and sisters can come and get in touch with the standards and ideals of the American people as they might do in the public school. It is a fine thing for cities to erect separate buildings and provide splendid parks for the recreation of their citizens. These are evidences of the good will of the municipality. Yet I deem it



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a finer thing if in some way we so arrange that not only the little children, and the older boys and girls, but the still older brothers and sisters, and the fathers and mothers, can come together into the public school, can here get in touch with the educative and philanthropic tendencies and influences of the public school system, and here acquire some of the standards of the American people, some of the ideals which we hope as the years go by they and their children will recognize and live up to. If by allowing in the schools this new educative influence we can bind more closely the loyalty of the people each to each and each to the public school we shall have accomplished a wonderfully fortunate thing for them and for the school. What is fortunate for them and for the school is fortunate for the community, is fortunate for the state.

### THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL CENTER AND ITS RELATION TO EVENING RECREATION CENTERS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES \*

W. C. MARTINDALE

Superintendent of Schools, Detroit, Michigan

The school as a social center means more than the establishment of public playgrounds or the employment of certain buildings for club use several evenings a week. It not only means a reconstruction of the planning of school buildings but also a change in the attitude of the community toward the school. The school is still looked upon as a place of repression by our boys and girls, a place of straight jacket discipline by many parents, who when they enter a school building are wont to walk on tiptoes and look furtively around for some imaginary pedagog to call them to account for not turning at the brass tack or for some other reason to hold them responsible for some finicky offense known only to the profession.

Since the question of the larger use of the school has been under discussion much has been told of the constant use of the little red school house as a civic center. Some of this is imaginary, some real. To be sure, there were during the winter term the usual magic lantern show with its final "Good Night" slide and the yearly visit

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\* Address delivered at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, June 7, 1912



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of a prestidigitator who pulled money out of unheard of places and could scramble eggs in deacon Brown's high hat. There were also spelling contests, writing lessons (ten for a dollar), and singing lessons, but with all this apparent use the gatherings were intermittent and unorganized. If the present movement is to continue there must be two elements present, the Board of Education with its organizers, the people ready and willing to take the initiative in the matter of arrangements. The second is a most vital point as the people must furnish the leaders to suggest, organize and assist in all the activities offered.

### **Evening Schools**

In the wider use of the schools we have our evening schools in which foreigners learn to speak and write English. Detroit had in the evening schools the past year forty different nationalities. These foreigners learn something more than to speak and write English. They learn of the customs of the people, their manner of living, their attitude toward civic questions. They learn of the government of their adopted country, of the laws and their duties as a part of the community. They learn that the public school is the common democratic meeting place where their children can best prepare for their life work and later, by loyalty to the institutions of this country, repay their great debt for the opportunities opened to them.

In the evening continuation classes in the high schools are taught English, German, French, Spanish, commercial subjects, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Mechanical Drawing, Machine Design, various branches of shop work, including pattern-making and work in the machine shop. The mission of the evening classes is not wholly for opportunities to study. The work in the shops, the department of household arts, the gymnasiums are a striking feature and of great social and civic value. These reinforced with entertainments and social gatherings lend a distinctive character to the work and provide an outlet for those necessary human yearnings for self-expression and companionship. All these and many other subjects are offered the four thousand students enrolled in the Central, Eastern and Western Evening High Schools. These schools afford the young men and young women who left school either because of financial reasons or because the school did not seem to offer what they most required, a means of continuing their education along lines related closely to their daily avocations. The results justify their maintenance. The argument used for these schools

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is that the young men and young women who find it necessary to leave school to contribute to their own support and the support of the family are entitled to the opportunities offered by the night high and continuation classes. That is, that the boy and the girl who must leave school early are entitled to the same consideration in the matter of instruction at *public expense* as the more fortunate boy or girl who is able to continue courses not only through the elementary and high school but also through the university by means of funds raised by *public taxation*. I shall consider this matter upon even broader grounds; that is, the industrial, commercial and civic needs of every community require that opportunity for better preparation for not only their daily avocation but for community life be furnished, to the end that the young men and young women as future homemakers shall be given every opportunity for improvement that their ability, inclination and financial condition will allow.

### **Playgrounds and Vacation Schools**

The Detroit public playgrounds and vacation schools with an aggregate attendance of two hundred thousand the past summer are another feature in this modern revived view of the school plant as belonging to the public and not to the Board of Education.

### **Baths**

The public baths were started as part of the playground activities. The swimming pools in which the past summer forty thousand swimming lessons were given also have their place. With all these activities the public are only beginning to awaken to the fact that the schools are for their use not five and one-half hours a day but for the entire twenty-four hours.

### **Civic Improvement Clubs**

Each day high school with its debating societies, Houses of Representatives, Orchestras, Glee Clubs, School papers, Literary and other societies, class entertainments, gymnasium classes and *team work* are much more than places for lesson getting. They are real social and civic centers, where all are a part of one great family, the school, that neutral ground where the rich are poor and the poor are the peers of their fellows. Another phase of school work which illustrates the wider use of school buildings, has been brought about through granting the use of these buildings to various clubs, principally civic improvement clubs. In many sections of our city, civic improvement societies have been organized for the purpose of securing improvements especially needed in particular sections. The

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meetings of these clubs attended by large numbers of enthusiastic citizens, are held regularly in school buildings and the open discussions which take place have proved to be of the utmost benefit to the community.

There are other club meetings held in the schools such as that of the Northwestern Research Club which uses the school buildings for lectures upon some theme related to literature, science or art, or, in fact, any subject of interest to the general membership of the club. We find some hesitancy on the part of the members in attending meetings held in school buildings, probably for the reasons previously given. We expect in time that meeting in a school building will be taken as a matter of fact and that the apathy shown by some of the people toward attending meetings in schools will finally disappear.

### **Lectures and Entertainments**

The privilege of giving lectures and entertainments in school buildings has been accorded to the Detroit Federation of Women's Clubs, who for the past twelve years, have labored earnestly and faithfully to give to the people of the localities where they are most needed, a series of entertainments and lectures particularly adapted to their needs. Last year nearly 150 of these evening affairs were held and I believe that before the session closes fully that number will have been held this season.

Evening stereopticon entertainments based on the regular school work are a feature peculiar to Detroit. Over 75 per cent. of our school buildings are constructed with large auditorium-kindergartens and equipped with stereopticons. We have a collection of 7,000 slides which circulate among the different schools illustrating all of the countries of the world, masterpieces of literature, famous paintings, and many other subjects which illustrate various phases of school work and bring life and action into it. The slides are used to illustrate the regular school lessons which are repeated in the evening under the direction of the principal and teacher and with the addition of a few songs by the children provide a most enjoyable and instructive program. These entertainments have had a twofold purpose. They have served to bring the parents into closer touch with the schools and to acquaint them with present day methods of teaching, and they have been the means of providing not only entertainment but, in many cases, instruction to the patrons of the district. A notable feature is the large number of men

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present—an aggregate attendance of 20,172 being reported for the season of 1910-1911.

### **The Social Center, the Evening Playground**

The Detroit plan which has been followed from the beginning of having social centers open five nights a week, two nights for the boys and two for the girls, and using Saturday nights alternately, has been pursued with entire satisfaction. The social centers during the past winter were open exactly one hundred nights, beginning with the second of October and closing on the seventh of March. The aggregate attendance was over 12,000.

The purely social side of the work includes the gymnasium and athletic features. It has been said that—"Any sort of activity tends to become play for the individual when skill in it is thoroughly acquired and reactions become subconscious so that it is easily done." If this be true, then many of the young people who come to the social centers in the evening who work in factories all day and perform the same tasks over and over, in time would come to regard their work as play. However, we know that this is not so, instead of becoming play it has become drudgery because the tasks set for them are either too monotonous or the environment is so unpleasant that they get no pleasure in performing them. For that reason we have found it advisable to introduce more of the recreative activities this year than last.

In discussing the activities that may be carried on in any social center, I am always reminded of what a young man told one of our directors on opening night when the plans for the winter were being explained to the boys—"Oh, well," said the young man referred to, "as long as we can have this nice warm room all lighted up like this where we can come in and meet the other fellows, it's all I want."

### **Gymnasium**

The gymnasium for both the boys and girls offers the most popular form of recreation. The boys engage in boxing, wrestling, club swinging and basket ball, while the girls delight in folk dancing which is for them perhaps the best form of gymnastic work, combining as it does graceful movements with light, healthful exercise. In addition they engage in gymnastic games and basket ball, a number of teams being formed at each center.

### **Dancing, Dramatics, Storytelling**

Alternate Saturday nights the boys and girls are taught social dancing by the physical training instructors. After the Saturday

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evening entertainments we have mixed dancing for the boys and girls of the social centers. The plan followed has been to allow the Girls' Department of a social center to invite the Boys' Department of that center to an entertainment, and after it was over the boys who were accompanied by their director were allowed to engage in dancing with the girls who were chaperoned by the director of the Girls' Department. The next time the party would be given by the Boys' Department. At two of the centers these have been popular, but at the others there was no desire on the part of the young people to have these dancing parties. We have found, however, that we have been able to provide many other popular forms of entertainment. One has been the production of a playlet or of a simple vaudeville entertainment given by members of the club. Story-telling has also proved popular. At other times concerts, elocutionary entertainments, simple—exceedingly simple, lectures and travel talks illustrated by the stereopticon have been given.

### **Reading**

Magazines are provided all of the social centers and several or more of the young people may always be seen gathered around the large reading table. The Public Library has established a branch station at each of those social centers and reports that most effective work has been done in reaching the home through the members of the social centers. An interesting story is told in this connection of a woman who attended one of the cooking classes and took home to her husband a German book which she obtained at the Library. Upon returning the book she said—"My man say I can come to the social center all the time if I bring home a good book like that."

### **Companionship**

For the working girl or boy who lives in a hall bedroom or at home in cramped quarters, the social center gives splendid opportunities. When a girl living under such conditions comes home from work at night, she enters a cheerless and lonely room or a crowded home in which there may be no one congenial to her. Young people must have companionship. If they do not they become morbid and may develop evil tendencies. Here in the social centers the girls find other girls of their own age of a similar position in life. At once there spring up friendships born of this congeniality. The women in charge of the Girls' Department are experienced in dealing with young people; they are always ready to lend a sympathetic ear and are the constant source of advice and counsel for the girls and young women who attend. In a lesser

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degree the same conditions exist in the Boys' Department. They of course are in charge of men who understand boy nature and are ready to satisfy in a masculine way all of the demands which young men of that age make upon them.

**Forming Character** It is surprising to note the development in the young people who have attended the social centers. Many of the girls have grown from hoydenish girlhood into womanhood. Their voices have been softened, their manners are more quiet and ladylike, their tongues are more gentle. With the boys the same is true. They have become men, some of them, waxing stronger mentally and physically and although there is no attempt at religious instruction, by necessity they have grown spiritually.

**Co-operation of Principals** The question of co-operation of principals and teachers in the forwarding of the movement for the larger use of the schools has not entered the question in my own city, as their assistance and co-operation have been given from the inception of the movement. In order to attain the highest degree of success in establishing playgrounds, vacation schools, recreation centers, public baths and the use of the school for public meetings and as centers of neighborhood social activity, this co-operation must be secured.

**A New Type of School Building** All school buildings erected in Detroit for the last fourteen years have auditoriums that will seat from 450 to 500 people. A number of these buildings have public baths, shops for the boys and rooms especially fitted for Household Arts work for the girls. There are also rooms which have been fitted up for use as gymnasiums. In some buildings we have found it necessary to remove seats from a regular school room, place wire screens upon the windows and use the rooms thus made available for gymnasiums in the evening, though using the rooms as usual for day school classes. It has been found more economical to group the activities which have lately come into the schools, such as evening schools, playground and vacation schools, social and recreation work, in buildings having the most complete facilities to carry on the work falling under these heads. By forming centers in neighborhoods where these activities are needed a marked saving of public funds is affected.

At the Bishop and Greusel Schools, typical of many others, in addition to the day school sessions, are evening school sessions, social



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center work, public playground and vacation schools, shower baths for the boys, shower baths for the girls, shops for the boys, rooms for instruction in Household Arts for the girls and the usual auditorium for lectures, entertainments and parties. We have found that engineers and janitors co-operate in all of this work most faithfully. However, it should be definitely understood that engineers and janitors should be paid for the work they do in connection with these additional activities. They should never be called upon to give their services gratuitously. As soon as they find, as they have already done with us, that these new activities are a part of the regular school routine for which they are paid in proportion to the amount of service given, no objection is made.

The day school principals and teachers co-operate with the school authorities by cheerfully giving up their rooms to be used for other work outside of school hours. It requires some self-sacrifice for teachers and principals to give over the school building for the hours that they are not used for the day school session for other purposes. However, in the matter of advertising and even coming to the schools to assist those having charge of the work after school hours, both principals and teachers have willingly given their time and active co-operation. They realize the wisdom of furnishing boys and girls with the activity of the playground and vacation school during the long summer vacation. They also know the value of furnishing through evening schools facilities for teaching recent immigrants the English language and something of the customs of the people and their institutions.

The day school principals and teachers also have a sympathetic interest in furnishing opportunities for evening recreation and study to young men and young women who find it necessary to leave school early to follow some bread-winning vocation. They know of the dangers surrounding these young people and the necessity for providing wholesome means of recreation and opportunities for improvement. With this intelligent co-operation the work in Detroit has been a success from the first.

### **Economy of Administration**

Now as to the matter of economy in administration—the evening schools, social centers, public baths, domestic science centers for the girls and shops for the boys are all in operation at the same time. The cost for heating, lighting, engineers' service and janitors' service is not greater for all of these activities *when placed in one*



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*building* than it would be if used for one activity alone. Thus you can see by consolidation and organization a tremendous saving is made in operating expense. The Board of Education is not extending this work more rapidly than a real demand is felt from fields in which the work has not yet been undertaken. By pursuing this policy, the work is a growth and a real part of the school system and not an excrescence.

### A National Question

The larger use of the school plant is not a local question in that it affects but few communities. It is a question which must receive a nation-wide solution. The working out of this problem for any one neighborhood or community is a local question in so far as funds and methods of organization are concerned. When a great public work such as the foregoing is projected, those who pay the taxes must be taken into the confidence of those who plan and project. Those who bear the burden of taxation as the beneficiaries must themselves be the ones who carry forward the propaganda. The continuation of any movement supported by public funds depends upon three elements: *merit of purpose and aim, efficiency of organization and economy of management, and results*. A failure in one of these essentials will endanger the success of the undertaking however meritorious the object.

The merit of a civic question embodying purpose or aim is closely related to result. The matters of efficiency of organization and economy of management are the *vital* elements when merit of purpose or aim has been affirmatively settled. It requires VISION to understand the MERIT of a great social movement. It requires power of discernment to effectively organize and to economically manage the machinery necessary to produce results evident to-day, to-morrow and for eternity.

Let us return for a moment to the premises laid down at the beginning of this paper. If the present movement for the larger use of the schools is to continue there must be two elements present, the Board of Education with its organizers, the people ready and willing to take the initiative in the matter of arrangements. The second is a most vital point as the people must furnish the leaders to suggest, organize and assist in all of the activities offered. By permitting those who participate in the activities of the social centers to propose and initiate methods of recreation, entertainment

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and amusement, the social center will evolve *from* and be a part of the community life.

In Zona Gale's clever book "Mothers to Men," one of the councilmen of Friendship Village in a plea for this new movement gives succinctly some reasons for the use of school houses for social center purposes.

"The town's nothin' but roots, is it? Roots, sendin' up green shoots to the top o' this hill to be trained up here into some kind of shape to meet life. What you doin' to 'em? Buildin' 'em a great, expensive schoolhouse that they use a few hours a day, part o' the year, an' the rest of the time it might as well be a hole in the ground for all the good it does anybody. An' here's the young folks, that you built it for chasin' the streets to let off the mere flesh-an'-blood energy the Lord has given to 'em. Put up your iron gates if you want to, but don't put 'em up till the evenin's over an' till there's been some sort o' doin's here like this to give 'em what's their right. Put up your iron gates, but shame on the schoolhouse that puts 'em up an' stops there! Open the buildin' in the name of public decency, but in the name of public decency, don't shut it up."

## THE RECREATION COMMISSION \*

DWIGHT F. DAVIS

Park Commissioner, St. Louis, Missouri

Our conception of the meaning of the term "recreation" has broadened tremendously in the last decade. Formerly we thought of "recreation" as referring merely to play, especially the play of children, as adults scorned the idea that they too might play. Even the instinct of children for play was looked upon as a rather wise provision of mother nature, designed to fill in the years until the child became a money-making machine. The adult who dared occasionally to play was looked upon as an incorrigible idler, or as a plutocratic parasite on society.

Nowadays all this is changed. We have come to realize that play is an absolute necessity in the healthful growth of the normal child, that through properly-directed play not only the minds and bodies, but especially the moral natures of the children can be developed in ways and to degrees impossible through other agencies.

\* Address delivered at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, June 6, 1912

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Recreation, then, has come to mean not only play, but also education, physical culture and ethics, and has even a commercial side, through the dance hall, moving-picture show and other forms of commercial recreation. The fact that this latter field has usually been an influence for evil instead of good does not indicate the failure of this influence, but rather its perversion along improper lines.

### **Adults**

Even for adults the necessity for recreation has been slowly perceived. We are beginning to realize the danger to the community of allowing men to be worked twelve hours a day, seven days in the week, of permitting children of tender age to be exploited in mine and factory, or the mothers of the race to be overworked at the very time when they most need rest and care. The efficiency expert is teaching us that even from the economic standpoint overwork is dangerous, while the recent investigation of the effect of overwork on women has shown not only the economic waste but the irreparable damage to the community.

Recreation, therefore, is now recognized as a valuable, indeed an absolutely essential factor in our civilization. This recognition has brought about many important developments in local and national policies. The limitations of the hours of labor for men and women, the absolute prohibition of labor for children under certain ages, these are essential if the leisure necessary for recreation is to be given. The establishment of playgrounds and recreation fields and the broader use of park and school grounds are their necessary corollaries, by affording the opportunities for the healthful use of this leisure time. The playground movement, originally limited to the providing of play space for children, is steadily broadening and is slowly grappling with the problem of organizing and influencing the recreation of adults as well as of children.

### **Political Control Unusual**

This increased realization of the importance of recreation to the community has raised many new problems in dealing with the proper organization and management of both public and private recreation. One serious difficulty confronting most municipal enterprises, that of political control, the recreation movement has in most instances escaped, due to the fact that the development of public recreation has been an outgrowth of the playground movement. Even in cities most strongly dominated by partisan politics the feeling has been steadily growing that the schools at least must be

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kept free from the spoils influence. The playgrounds, dealing as they did with much the same children, using in many cases the same properties and employing the same trained instructors, benefited by this latent feeling and were thus more easily kept free from improper political influence. In many cases, also, the playgrounds had been started by private citizens, who were unwilling that the cause for which they had made many sacrifices should suffer when it was taken over by the city government. In order that the benefit of their knowledge and experience might be retained, but more particularly that the training of the children might not suffer from political control, many cities established recreation commissions, into whose hands were committed the direction and management of the playgrounds, public baths and similar institutions.

With the broadening of the field of recreation, however, new problems confront the recreation commissions. The most important of these problems are those arising out of the direction and control of the recreation of adults and the supervision of commercial recreation. The first presents few difficulties. Although differing in detail from the questions which have arisen in connection with the playgrounds for children, they are similar in character and through experience and experimentation will be easily solved. The broader use of park and school properties, the development of recreation fields which offer facilities for tennis, base-ball and golf, the building of swimming-pools, the extension of folk dancing to the older people, evening lectures and entertainments, these and other activities are being provided to a constantly increasing degree. The problems deal largely with administration and will be handled without difficulty by the department charged with the responsibility, whether it is the recreation commission, park board or some other department of the city government.

### **Regulation of Commercial Recreation**

The regulation of the private or commercial side of recreation, which has in recent years become more and more developed, through the moving picture shows, dance halls and other agencies, presents a more difficult problem. The tremendous influence of these commercial amusements upon public morals is now beginning to be realized. It is obvious that the community must regulate them in self defense. Whether to entrust this power of regulation to some existing governmental agency, or to create some new body to per-

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form these duties, is a serious problem. Theoretically the regulation should be done by the police force, but practical experience has proved that under present conditions, in America at least, police regulation of commercial recreation has been unsatisfactory and often demoralizing to the force itself. The fact that political influence is still a potent factor in police affairs, and that the dance halls and moving picture shows are in probably the great majority of cases under the control of men who exercise considerable political pressure, makes regulation of commercialized recreation by the police force a farce at the present time in most cities.

This situation has brought about the demand for regulation of commercial recreation through some outside governmental agency, such as special commissions, or where they exist, by recreation commissions. Two phases of this problem have been presented: the first dealing with the investigation of conditions, and the second with the regulation of the evils invariably found to exist. While of course, investigation is necessary before curative methods can be properly applied, the existing conditions are so well known to anyone familiar with modern city life, and have been so clearly set forth in the reports of the Chicago Vice Commission, the Kansas City Board of Public Welfare and similar bodies, that it is to be hoped little time will be wasted on this preliminary step. Investigation may be necessary to determine the form which the evil has taken under local conditions, but it is unnecessary in order to determine whether or not the evil exists.

The second phase, the method of regulation, presents a more difficult problem.\* The ultimate solution, it seems to me, must be through the police force, acting under the pressure of an enlightened public conscience, awakened at last to the enormity of present-day evils, and determined for self-preservation to stamp them out. Until this happy day comes, however, temporary measures must be taken, and the question arises whether this temporary duty of regulation shall be thrown upon the recreation commissions already existing, or upon newly created bodies. My personal opinion is that in cities

\* During the coming year the whole question of recreation administration will be investigated by a special committee of the Association and a report rendered at the next Recreation Congress. The question was studied by a special committee two years ago, information being gathered from every part of the country. At that time the committee found the sentiment strong for placing the city playground problems in the hands of a single commission and so recommended. At the present time several cities are considering the question of placing the regulation of commercial recreation in the hands of the recreation commission. Many are convinced this should be done. Mr. Davis presents the arguments on the other side clearly. The thorough discussion of this question will be of help to all. EDITOR

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where the regular police force cannot, or rather will not, handle this problem, the duty should devolve on some other body than the recreation commissions. Most of these commissions are made up of men and women who are interested primarily in the training of children, and who are unfitted both by temperament and experience to cope with the quite different problem of regulating commercial recreation. The average member of a recreation commission has no conception of political conditions which are a potent factor in commercial recreation at the present time, and would not know how to deal with the underground influences which must be fought if the regulation is to be effective. Then too the commissions, while they ordinarily have the confidence and esteem of the public behind them in the management of public recreation, have not the authoritative official influence in dealing with public morals and conduct that will be necessary in regulating commercial recreation. The commissions usually are organized as administrative, not as regulative bodies and their organization and powers would have to be radically changed to enable them to cope with the new problems presented in such regulation. In fact there is no more reason for the regulation of the moving picture show or dance hall by the recreation commission than of the saloon. And finally the fight against the subtle influences behind the dance halls and moving picture shows might endanger the comparative immunity from this influence which the playgrounds have enjoyed, if the regulation of these amusements is put under the same commission that directs the playgrounds.

### **A Representative Commission**

For these reasons I do not believe that the recreation commissions, as organized in most cities, are the proper bodies to undertake the difficult task of regulating public recreation. Personally, while I deprecate the establishment of new commissions for every conceivable purpose, I believe that the plan adopted in some cities of a commission composed of representatives of bodies already organized, might be tried as a purely temporary expedient, to deal with this problem. The school board, park board or recreation commission and the police force are all vitally interested in this question. A commission composed of representatives of each of these bodies, together with a few citizens especially interested in and qualified for this work should exercise a great influence in the proper solution of this problem. Such a body would also assist



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in co-ordinating various departments which are dealing with the same problems from different angles.

Their most important service, however, would not, in my opinion, be the actual regulation of the evils known to exist, but rather the education of the public to the realization of their extent and of the danger to the community of allowing them to continue.

### **Public Ownership of Dance Halls and Motion Picture Theatres**

The whole subject of recreation is in the early stages of evolutionary growth. The first step was the playground for children, maintained by private initiative. Gradually the public recognized the value of this work to the community and took it over as an essential part of the city governmental machinery. Later this recognition extended to the recreation of adults, and this is now being largely developed. The possibilities as well as the dangers of the dance hall and moving pictures are now dimly realized, and it does not require a great exertion of the imagination to see them passing through the phase of public regulation to that of public ownership. Socialistic, perhaps—but if socially necessary, the name should frighten no one. The public school, the public playground, the public bath, though socialistic, are none the less valuable to the community and this would be equally true of the public dance hall and the public moving picture show.

The control and management of recreation should in my opinion follow the same evolutionary steps. The education of the public through private initiative to the value of playgrounds has already brought about their establishment and maintenance as a regular part of the work of city government. The proper provision for adult recreation is simply an extension of this idea. And finally the prevention of the evils incident to the unregulated private management of commercial recreation should ultimately be undertaken by the regular body organized for preventive regulation, the police force, while the constructive adaptation to public use of the forces first developed through private initiative in commercial recreation should be the duty of that department of the regular city machinery already charged with the responsibility of directing the facilities for public recreation.

### **An Opportunity to Aid in Reforming Corrupt Politics**

After all, the question of the proper control of recreation facilities is merely a small part of the whole problem of city government. Government, whether of city, state or nation,



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should be brought closer to the individual citizen. If our theory of universal suffrage is correct, the responsibility for evil conditions rests on him, and he should have the full power to correct them. The more this responsibility is brought home to him in his daily life, the quicker will he awake to the necessity of his fulfilling the duties connected with it. Instead of striking at the roots of corrupt politics, we have in the past gradually taken away from the city governments control of many of the functions which vitally interest us, with the result the average citizen has been content to abandon the remainder of the machine rather than to take the trouble of fighting the conditions which he has dimly realized. A paternalistic management of vitally important functions by outside commissions may bring better results in that particular field, but if by so doing it makes the citizen unwilling to undertake the responsibility of correcting conditions in other lines, the cost of efficient management—even if it were always obtained through unpaid commissions, which unfortunately it is not,—would be too great. So it is with recreation commissions. They have been established in the past largely because of the fear that the regular city government would not properly carry on the work. As a temporary expedient, designed to educate the public to the importance of the movement and to the necessity for its proper conduct, they have served their purpose. Ultimately, however, the commissions must cease to be, as they have often been in the past, more or less independent of the regular city government, and must become a part of the regular machinery. Our problems, whether of preventive regulation or constructive up-building, must finally be worked out through the regular governmental channels, unless we are prepared to admit that we are unfit to govern ourselves.\*

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\* Interested as we all are in good city government many of us are not yet ready in our own cities to try the experiment of giving up our recreation commissions and throwing the management of the recreation centers back into politics for the sake of purifying politics. In the same way educational workers desiring better political conditions, when asked to give up their board of education, question whether good politics will be influenced sufficiently to justify the lowering of educational standards by giving up their board. In both education and recreation there are volunteers with expert knowledge willing to give much time without pay to advising with reference to the problem in which they are so vitally interested. The question is whether while keeping final responsibility in the city government it is possible to have the benefit of the advice of a group of experts who concentrate on the one problem of recreation and stand behind the recreation secretary. EDITOR

## CAMP FIRE GIRLS\*

LUTHER HALSEY GULICK, M.D.,

Director Child Hygiene Department, Russell Sage Foundation

Mrs. Walter Hervey during the past eleven years has been keeping track of the various organizations and movements which have sprung up and been carried on for boys and girls. Her records indicate that there has been twenty times as much organized work done by and for boys and men as has been done by and for girls and women. But the mere fact that a thing has been done by and for boys in itself constitutes no adequate reason why it should be copied for girls, and unless some adequate reason can be given why one more national organization should not be perpetrated upon a long-suffering public, it should be stillborn.

It is my function tonight, not to describe the Camp Fire Girls in attractive terms which might inspire you to organize a local Camp Fire, but to tell you of those conditions which seem to make it imperative and inevitable that there should come to girls and women a new consciousness of world relations. The women of the world are coming to have a consciousness, not of freedom, but of obligation to the community, which is new, tremendous, compelling. The thing is inevitable.

Mr. Lee spoke last night from the protective and conservative standpoint with reference to the home. Our brilliant president has always been identified with those movements which have sanely endeavored to preserve the fundamental unit of society, the home. He described how work, industry, has well nigh gone from our homes, owing to the introduction and development of machinery. The day of the specialized farm is as true as the day of the specialized city. The man on the wheat field is no less a specialist than is the bank president or the man who drives the motor car; no longer do children work with their fathers; to only a slight extent do girls work with their mothers, as compared with those long ages during which the precious traditions of the home have arisen.

It is not my function to-night to mourn the things that have gone from the home, for there is coming to the community to-day the love, the devotion, which has characterized the home, and

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\* Address delivered at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, June 6, 1912

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which is to make the community the larger home. The home, in the sense of its being a set of relationships between a man and a woman, between a mother and a child, between a father and his children, between brothers and sisters, between friend and friend, an organized set of relationships which depended upon work, play and worship together,—has gone, because the activities have gone upon which it was built. The sympathy between the son and the father, when the boy drove the horse and the father held the plow, is built upon a human relationship of necessity, and can never be built merely upon having recreation together,—and I believe in play. The work that has been done in the home has gone to the community, but the significance of this fact has not yet been driven home to us, the meaning of the fact that woman has also gone into the community. It is not because the women of Japan are struggling for the suffrage that now there are thousands of women and girls working in factories. It is not because of human wisdom or desire that hundreds of thousands of women have stepped out of the home, have carried the home into the community, as teachers, instead of sitting merely by the fireside and passing on the traditions of our kind as well as the physical functions of motherhood. They are now passing on the finer traditions of motherhood to mankind,—the love and protection of all children. That is the universal community of motherhood which is to reform our cities into places which shall be beautiful for children and make of our cities the abode of love which women and children have made of the home. Men have made cities that were good to work in. We have made places out of our cities that were bad to live in, but when women and children can do for the community through love and service what they have done to the home, a new world will be with us.

### **Making Drudgery Romantic**

How and what does it all mean, we ask. The greatest crime, the most wicked thing in the world, the thing that works most calamity to humankind, is that which makes the good and useful appear to be dull and undesirable, which makes it seem unattractive to tread the paths of righteousness, to make it appear to be more romantic to go in the forbidden lanes of unconventional life. This is false. We work every day in our kitchens, schoolhouses and shops. Daily life seems to be drudgery. In reality it is romance. What romance, what wonders, are at our service every day, such as our fathers

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never thought of. I received a telegram this evening from my wife in New York, and another from a friend in Indiana; I daily travel in the Subway and go across those wonderful suspension bridges. Last week I saw a biplane flying through the air. I saw from my windows a torpedo boat destroyer going up the river. Every day the elevator carries me up forty stories to my office six hundred feet in the air. My little girl goes to a school such as was undreamed of in any time in the history of the world before. And we close our eyes to all this for some reason, perhaps because the days and years have cast a leaden coating over the brilliant gold. The fundamental purpose of the Camp Fire Girls is to so treat the things of daily life as to brush away the dull gray coating of the apparent daily drudgery and revive the inherent romance, achievement and adventure of human life. To learn how to make ten kinds of standard soups, and to stand before the ceremonial fire and be honored for that achievement is not child's play. It is not gilding lead; it is cleaning gold. And when the girl learns the songs of fifteen birds, it is an adventure to go out into the woods and listen to the birds and learn their songs. It is an achievement to understand the meaning of three kinds of baby cries.

### **Making Woman's Work Measurable**

Woman's work has never been given status. My wife has not known whether she was a good homemaker. It is known whether a woman speaks well, writes well, or dresses well, moves in society with little social friction and much social charm, and things of that kind. But the things which have been considered her serious business, for those there has been no status. By giving an honor for three or four kinds of definite activities performed according to a recognized standard, we establish a status for woman's work. Another thing is tied up in that. Science is only possible where measurement is possible. People always knew that things fell, but until Newton measured the accelerating rate of a fall no one knew the effect of the forces of gravity upon bodies having weight and momentum.

Man's work has been measured to a certain extent because men have moved in a measurable world. Woman's work has never been measured. It is not harder, but there is no measurement, no beginning, no end to any part of it. My daughter, who used to teach, has been keeping house for us. She says that the difference between working at home and working outside the home lies in the fact that

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outside she is community paid and does community measured work; while at home she is supposed to work four hours a day and is paid for it. She does the work faithfully and is competent and efficient, but she says she cannot get it done. If she spends all the four hours every day she cannot get the house so clean but that it could be gotten cleaner. In regard to dishwashing it is the same. Dishes won't stay washed. It is quite an adventure, after a party, to have everyone, guests and all, go down into the kitchen and wash the dishes, but they have to be washed the next meal, and the next, and the next, when there are no guests to make the thing exciting. She says: "As long as I am responsible for this house, everywhere I go I see unfinished work looking at me and calling to me. I am never free from it, since there is always something that ought to be done, even though I have done my four hours' work." You go to your office, factory or school, work certain hours, and then you are out. At home you are never out.

There is no way of measuring the darning of stockings,—you never get them all darned. The Camp Fire Girls have endeavored to find some measurement of the work which girls do, as well as to help them see the romance of it, and to give status to it. I do not mean to say it is as difficult to learn how to make ten different kinds of soup as it is to prove that a stitch in time saves nine, for a week, every week, or as it is to walk forty miles in ten days. I do not know how fair those units of measurement are. That is not the point. The point is that everything counts—and we never had that before. The principle of giving definite recognition for definite work in the home is new in the world of woman's work. Domestic work cannot be standardized and cannot come into the rank of the world professions until it can be measured as other things are measured.

### **Symbolism and the Formation of Character**

How are we going to revive the romance, the beauty, the adventure? The most difficult phase of it we are trying to handle through symbolism. Each Camp Fire Girl gets a new name. One girl who had been much inspired by reading Royce's *Philosophy of Loyalty* chose for her new name "Vega," because to her that meant loyalty, and for her symbol a conventionalized star design, because that meant steadiness, fixed purpose, and all that goes with loyalty. The design will go on her pin and upon her ceremonial gown. The mere fact of that girl deliberately choosing that,

## CAMP FIRE GIRLS

by which she shall be known, as the symbol of steadiness and permanency, unchanging loyalty, is not only revealing her character, but is creating character.

The little girl whose picture you see in the Camp Fire Girls' book taking the angel dive, acquired power over herself by diving. After she won the test I said to her: "Wawa, how did you plan the race?" and she answered: "Well, I thought if I could get ahead of the leading boy and stay ahead of him I would probably win." And she did. That girl was more or less awkward when she began. She had been criticized so much by her parents that she had become self-conscious and thought only of her failures. But here was something she could do; here was a victory which she could gain in competition with others. She began to understand the happiness of success. She chose the name of "Wawa," the duck, and made for her symbol a conventionalized figure of a duck, which she has put on a silver bracelet which she made for herself. In the middle is her mother's design, and on the other end a design the meaning of which she has never told anyone. I think it has something to do with her future. She wears the bracelet, and it is a sign to her of carrying things through to a successful issue. No number of mottoes or of good texts could stir that girl's imagination so that her character was changed, as the vision of the duck, because it represented a moral victory and control over herself. No memory of any passage she could learn could mean to Vega what her conventionalized star means to her, because it seems as if when we put things into words we thereby limit them. That design represents feelings which cannot be put into words.

### **Surrounding the Home with Beauty and Romance**

If we can take these splendid stirring ideas, the finest and highest that belong to the particular person, and tie them up in forms of beauty which will stir that person's imagination permanently, then we shall have accomplished that which symbols in the world have accomplished. Why should girls be so stirred by the wearing of a gold circle on the third finger of the left hand? Because it says, "I am engaged." But the hopeless inadequacy of those words to express the wonderful relation the ring symbolizes! Here is a symbol limited only by the wearer's imagination. That is why we depart from prose and turn to poetry and symbolism, which reach down to the foundations of things, the ideals, the hopes, the ambitions. If we can stir those, then we are on bed rock. We



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are not so much swayed by intellectual ideals as by the things we hope for, dream of, love and desire.

Cooking used to be thought a very humble, plain thing. Now we put it into our schools and call it domestic science. We arrange a hollow square and at intervals place gas stoves, and in the hollow square are young women in professional cooking garb. At certain hours the school girls come and are shown how to put certain ingredients together to make a result. That is not cooking; that is physics and chemistry. Cooking is the best form of art through which social relations have come to human kind. The common service of the table represents one of the foundation stones of human social life. It has been a part of the traditions and the customs all through the world, eating salt together, breaking bread together, the Lord's Supper indicating the partaking of the common source of life. That is not physics and chemistry. When we take this thing out of the home and cook a hypothetical meal we have taught one of the things upon which the beautiful social relationships of the family rest. It is not of any particular significance to learn cooking. It is a fancy accomplishment. We teach sewing and cooking in the schools. Girls are not going to be called upon to do these things much in after life—why learn them? Because by knowing how to do them the girl expresses thereby her social relationships. If our girls can learn what it means to serve adequately their own friends with their own hands, making perfect physical representations of the social service represented, and partake of the common food together, so that they love it, then cooking has been learned, but no amount of physics and chemistry will establish a love of the home. Love of the home is the fundamental love of human relationships existing within the home, and that is why schools of domestic science are failures. Mothers write in every day saying they have read the *Camp Fire Girls'* book and want to form their daughters and their neighbors' girls into a Camp Fire. They are mothers who wish to come again into social relationship with their own daughters. There is no cry so bitter as the consciousness of the little there is in common in daily life between mothers and daughters. The *Camp Fire Girls* promises to do largely what it is already doing to some extent—bring girls to realize their need of, and to love these precious relationships with their own mothers, relations of beauty, romance, adventure, and those things which are basic in social life.

## CAMP FIRE GIRLS

### Team Play

I tried to buy a picture some time ago, called "What the West Wind Said to Me." It was a picture of three trees bending over as if being blown by a powerful, steady wind, the branches all going in one direction, in the glowing western sky a cloud, and dimly seen coming with the west wind, the form of a young woman with outstretched arm and with eyes closed. Just that is what is happening. Suffrage is inevitable, for women cannot discharge this new obligation to the children of the city unless they have power commensurate with their responsibilities. If women are to be responsible for the social life of the community, for getting dance halls that instead of doing harm shall do good, schools that shall be human instead of scholastic, they must learn the kind of power that is indicated by that picture. How are women going to learn it? One way is to learn to do team work. Boys get licked into team work. Girls get none of it in their training. There has been no reason for it until now. What chance have the girls of the coming generation to learn team play? They play basket ball, but only one per cent. What opportunity is there for girls to learn the kind of leadership that the captain of a baseball team gets in the course of three or four years at college? And yet this responsibility is upon us all, for it rests upon men and women alike. Girls must be given an opportunity to acquire power and leadership. The Camp Fire Girls, perhaps, does give opportunity for all girls to learn to keep step.

A girl can only become a Torch Bearer who has trained at least three other girls in something for two months. That is, status is given to the girl who can reach out and take hold and do something which is related to her fellows. If she knows how to swim she can get together a group of three little girls one hour a week and drill them. Those three little girls are examined to see if she has done her work so well that she is entitled to become a Torch Bearer. The examination is of her work, not of herself. The same is true of folk dancing, and folk stories. The learning and telling of folk stories before a group wins an honor. If the girl can train three little girls to do that she can become a Torch Bearer. Next year she can start a little group of a dozen, and then become a Guardian of the Camp Fire. In this way a girl is given a chance to grow in leadership and power such as she never had before in the world's history.

## CAMP FIRE GIRLS

### **To Make Cities More Beautiful**

The Fire Maker's desire is to me one of the two supreme things, devotion to the community—the new patriotism—to make cities beautiful places in which to live, and to bring about beautiful social relations in the community, as well as in the home. It is the individual expressing her desire and devotion to the community as she might to her own fireside.

“As fuel is brought to the fire  
So I purpose to bring  
My strength  
My ambition  
My heart's desire  
My joy  
And my sorrow  
To the fire  
Of humankind  
For I will tend  
As my fathers have tended  
And my fathers' fathers  
Since time began  
The fire that is called  
The love of man for man  
The love of man for God.”

We may give to our girls, through means of this kind, help to weave the tangled threads of community life into beautiful, suitable patterns—to weave into the tissue of society itself, beauty, romance, adventure and love.

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## RECREATION AND AN EFFICIENT CIVILIZATION

Recreation, by making the individual's life more vital and more wholesome, by quickening his thought, by enabling him to do his work in less time, makes him more efficient and more valuable to society. Wholesome recreation creates a spiritual atmosphere, responsiveness, a quickness of perception, flashes of insight which make it possible for the human race to advance from generation to generation. Wholesome recreation stores up energy so that men after bearing the load of the routine of life have power in their play hours to make guesses as to the yet undiscovered laws of the world and to keep on making guesses until a universal law is found, the work of the world made easier and man given yet more time for leisure and for life. Only so long as a country has a play spirit powerful and vital enough to drive men beyond the routine of life can it continue to have progress.